

FICPI AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE FOR IP FIRM LEADERS

Crystalbrook Riley, Cairns, Far North Queensland | 6-9 August 2026

All activity meeting points are outside Zone 1 (next to the Spa), unless otherwise stated. Please advise if transport is required for Friday dinner or Saturday lunch.

THURSDAY 6 AUGUST 2026

14:30-18:00	Arrival and check-in at Crystalbrook Riley
15:00-16:00 approx.	Gallery Tour Meet outside Zone 1 (next to the Spa) at 3:00 pm. The gallery is a 10 minute walk from the hotel. Please make your own way back to the hotel at leisure. <i>No RSVP required.</i>
18:30-19:30	Welcome Drinks and Canapes
19:30-21:00	Conference Dinner - Crystalbrook Riley

FRIDAY 7 AUGUST 2026

06:30-08:30	Guided morning walk - Cairns Botanic Gardens Guided walk led by BirdLife Northern Queensland guide Denis Walls. Meet outside Zone 1 (next to the Spa) at 6:30 am sharp for a short taxi to the Gardens. Walk from 7:00-8:20 am. Back at the hotel at approximately 8:30 am. <i>Please RSVP to tj@tjip.com.au</i>
09:00-10:30	SESSION 1: Recruitment, Retention and the Changing Bargain The talent market has changed, and IP firms need a new perspective. People are every IP firm's most valuable - and complex - asset. This session tackles the full talent lifecycle: what great hiring looks like in a competitive market, how to structure onboarding and development, what determines whether your best people stay, and what happens when you throw AI into the mix. Chair: Ronelle Geldenhuys, Principal, Jones Maxwell Smith & Davis Speaker: Andy Mukherji, Principal, MBIP Speaker: Eva Grabner, Recruitment Specialist, Elite Executive Speaker: Michael Caine, Principal, DCC
10:30-11:00	Morning Tea

11:00-12:30	SESSION 2: The Real Cost of IP Enforcement: Human, Legal and Economic Realities Fashion designer Katie Perry successfully defended her right to her own name against one of the world's biggest pop acts. In this candid session, Katie shares her firsthand experience - the decisions, the costs, the emotional toll, and ultimately the win - and what it means for clients navigating similar battles. Expert financial analyst Hans Weemaes will provide an economic and evidentiary lens for this case. Chair: Chris Bird, Principal, FPA Patent Attorneys Speaker: Katie Perry, Fashion Designer & Trade Mark Holder, katieperry.com.au Speaker: Hans Weemaes, Financial Analyst and Expert Witness on Pricing and Costs, The Brattle Group
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30-15:00	SESSION 3: Case Law to Examination Practice: How IP Australia Implements Change Changes in patent law and disruptive new technologies do not implement themselves. This session looks at how IP Australia absorbs both into day-to-day examination practice, using two case studies: the shift in computer-implemented invention and section 40 law, and the rapid rise of generative AI. Pradnya Satarkar will first explain how IP Australia identifies shifting legal thresholds, updates the Patent Manual of Practice and Procedure, trains examiners for consistency, and takes in feedback from the profession. The session then turns to the growing use of AI by self-filing applicants to draft specifications and responses. The discussion will cover the operational strain this puts on IP Australia, and how it is reshaping client expectations, firm economics, and risk for attorneys defending traditional drafting practice. The final segment is a chaired discussion between the speakers and the floor, exploring how the profession and the Office should respond together to these shifts. Chair: Rohan Wallace, Principal, IP Sentinels Speaker: Pradnya Satarkar, Director, Packaging & Appliances Section and Hearing Officer, IP Australia
15:00-15:30	Afternoon Tea
15:30-17:00	SESSION 4: From Campus to Practice: Preparing the Next Generation of IP Professionals There is a persistent gap between what law and IP programs teach and what life in an IP firm actually demands. This panel brings together leading academics and a recent graduate-turned-practitioner to explore what universities are - and are not - preparing graduates for, and what firms can do to bridge the gap. Chair: Maryam Tabari, Principal, Chrysiliou IP Speaker: Prof. Jessica Lai, University of Wellington Speaker: Prof. Andrew Christie, Melbourne Law School Speaker: Andrew Counsell, Associate, FB Rice
17:00-17:45	Free time
17:45 sharp	Meet for walk to dinner venue Meet outside Zone 1 (next to the Spa) at 5:45 pm sharp to walk to Tamarind Restaurant, or make your own way there. The restaurant is approximately a 15 minute walk from the hotel. Please advise if transport is required.
18:00-21:00	Conference Dinner - Tamarind Restaurant, Cairns Dress code: Tropical Elegance. Bring out your colourful outfits or cool shirts.

SATURDAY 8 AUGUST 2026

07:00-07:45	Hotel yoga session The hotel runs yoga sessions for guests at the front of the hotel. Yoga mats are provided in rooms. <i>No RSVP required.</i>
From 08:45	Light food before Saturday sessions Light food will be provided at the start of the Saturday sessions.
09:00-10:30	SESSION 5: Building Your Brand, Growing Your Firm: Marketing and BD Strategies for IP Practices Marketing and business development are core to sustainable growth. This session brings together specialists at the intersection of professional services and revenue growth to share practical strategies for building your firm's profile, attracting the right clients, and converting relationships into revenue. Chair: Christian Schieber, Principal, Griffith Hack Speaker: Sue-Ella Prodonovich, Prodonovich Advisory, Professional Services BD Specialist Speaker: Tracey Langdale, Head of Marketing & BD, MBIP
10:30-11:00	Morning Tea
11:00-13:00	FICPI Australia Special General Meeting
13:30-14:00	Walk to lunch venue Ochre Restaurant is approximately a 15 minute walk from the hotel. Please advise if transport is required.
14:00-17:00	Long Lunch - Ochre Restaurant, Cairns

SUNDAY 9 AUGUST 2026

07:30-15:15	Optional excursion - Green Island, Great Barrier Reef Meet outside Zone 1 (next to the Spa) at 7:30 am sharp for a 15 minute walk to the ferry. The excursion includes a short boat trip from Cairns to Green Island on the Great Barrier Reef, optional glass-bottom boat tour, time on the beach, and a snack lunch. Children welcome.
15:15	Return to mainland
15:30-17:00	Salthouse Restaurant, Cairns Esplanade Afternoon tasting boards and drinks at Salthouse until 5:00 pm.

Program subject to change. <https://au.ficpi.org/events/>